

CLAIMS

1. A method of controlling the output of common media content on a group of user devices (10,11,12), said method comprising the steps of:

5 generating at a one user device (10) of the group control instructions for governing the output of multimedia content at other user devices (11,12) of the group in communication with the said one user device,

 transmitting said control instructions from said one device (10) to the other user devices (11,12),

10 receiving at each said other user device (11,12) the control instructions; and

 controlling the output of media content at that other device (11,12) under command of said control signals so as to facilitate output of common multimedia content at each other user device (11,12) of the group in
15 substantially synchronised manner.

2. A method in accordance with claim 1 and further comprising the step of providing common multimedia content to said other user devices (11,12) from said one user device.

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3. A method in accordance with claim 1 and further comprising the step of providing said common multimedia content from a remote source.

4. A method in accordance with any one or more of claims 1 to 3 and
25 further comprising the step of providing to at least one of the user devices at least a portion of said multimedia content in advance of the time such multimedia content is required for output and storing that portion of multimedia content for use by said at least one user device.

30 5. A method in accordance with any one or more of claims 1 to 4 and further comprising the steps of:

receiving at control means of said one user device (10) control instructions generated within said device; and

controlling the output of media content at said one device (10) under command of said control instructions so as to facilitate output of the common
5 media content at said one device (10) in substantially synchronised manner in comparison with output of the media content at the other user device or devices (11,12) of the group.

6. A method in accordance with any one or more of claims 1 to 5
10 wherein said multimedia content comprises any one member of the group comprising video sequences or a collection of photographic images.

7. A method in accordance with any one or more of claims 1 to 6
15 wherein said control instructions comprise representations of any member of the group of commands comprising stop, play, forward, next, rewind, previous, record, jump to sequence position x, start from sequence position x, stop at sequence position x and synchronise at sequence position x.

8. A method in accordance with any one or more of claims 1 to 7
20 wherein said control instructions are transmitted over a communications link (13,14,15) established by a wireless LAN, Bluetooth wireless link, GPRS and/or 3G based communication based system.

9. Apparatus having the technical features of a user device of any one
25 or more of claims 1 to 8 and configured to perform as the user device.

10. A system configured to perform the method of any one or more of claims 1 to 8.

30 11. A computer program product comprising instructions for causing a programmable computer to implement the specific method steps and / or apparatus features of the invention in any of its aspects as set forth herein.

12. A computer program product as claimed in claim 11 supplied independently of any computer hardware in the form of a record carrier.

5 13. A computer program product as claimed in claim 11 supplied independently of any computer hardware in electronic form over a network.